

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

A detailed listing of all claims that are, or were, in the present application, irrespective of whether the claim(s) remains under examination in the application are presented below. The claims are presented in ascending order and each includes one status identifier.

1. (Original) A method of welding together two metal work-pieces, the method including the following steps:

providing two metal work-pieces,

preparing a portion of each work-piece, the preparation including the performance of a surface treatment, including a friction stir welding process, that results in a region extending from the exterior surface into the work-piece having a grain structure that is finer than the grain structure of the work-piece outside that region, and then

welding together the work-pieces by means of a fusion welding process that joins the respective prepared portions of the two work-pieces,

wherein said region extends into the work-piece to a depth that exceeds the depth of material that is caused to melt during the fusion welding process.

2. (Original) A method according to claim 1, wherein the surface treatment is conducted to a depth of at least 10mm into each work-piece and wherein the depth of the joint to be fusion welded is greater than 50mm.

3. (Original) A method according to claim 1, wherein the surface treatment is performed such that there is at least one cross-section in which the difference between the grain

size number of the material in the work-piece outside the region that has been subjected to said surface treatment and the grain size number of the material in the work-piece inside the region is greater than or equal to 4.

4. (Original) A method according to claim 1, wherein the step of preparing the work-pieces includes a step of treating or machining the surface-treated regions of each work-piece to produce a surface on one work-piece that can be fusion welded to a corresponding surface on the other work-piece.

5. (Original) A method according to claim 1, wherein the fusion welding process is performed by means of an electron beam welding process.

6. (Original) A method according to claim 1, wherein the work-pieces are made from aluminium alloys.

7. (Original) A method according to claim 1, wherein the work-pieces are made from cold-worked metal.

8. (Original) A method according to claim 1, wherein the work-pieces are suitable for use in the manufacture of an aircraft component.

9. (Original) A method of welding together two work-pieces, the method including the following steps:

providing two metal work-pieces,  
friction stir welding a region of each work-piece,  
preparing the friction stir welded regions of each work-piece to produce a surface on one work-piece that can be fusion welded to a corresponding surface on the other work-piece, and  
fusion welding the respective prepared surfaces of the two work-pieces together, thereby joining the work-pieces.

10. (Original) A method of welding together two metal work-pieces, the method including the following steps:

providing two metal work-pieces,  
preparing a portion of each work-piece, the preparation including the performance of a surface treatment that results in a region extending from the exterior surface into the work-piece having a grain structure that is finer than the grain structure of the work-piece outside that region, and

welding together the work-pieces by means of a fusion welding process that joins the respective prepared portions of the two work-pieces,

wherein said region extends into the work-piece to a depth that exceeds the depth of material that is caused to melt during the fusion welding process.

11. (Original) A method according to claim 1, wherein the work-pieces, when welded together, form at least part of a block of metal, the method further including the step of manufacturing an aircraft component, wherein the aircraft component is machined from the block of metal.

12. (Original) A method according to claim 9, wherein the work-pieces, when joined, form at least part of a block of metal, the method further including the step of manufacturing an aircraft component, wherein the aircraft component is machined from the block of metal.

13. (Original) A method according to claim 10, wherein the work-pieces, when welded together, form at least part of a block of metal, the method further including the step of manufacturing an aircraft component, wherein the aircraft component is machined from the block of metal.

14. (Original) A method according to claim 1, wherein the method further includes a step of making an aircraft component from the work-pieces when welded together, and a step of manufacturing an aircraft including the aircraft component.

15. (Original) A method according to claim 9, wherein the method further includes a step of making an aircraft component from the work-pieces when welded together, and a step of manufacturing an aircraft including the aircraft component.

16. (Original) A method according to claim 10, wherein the method further includes a step of making an aircraft component from the work-pieces when welded together, and a step of manufacturing an aircraft including the aircraft component.

17. (Cancelled).

18. (Cancelled).

19. (Original) A component made from two work-pieces welded together in accordance with the method as claimed in claim 1.

20. (Original) A component made from two work-pieces welded together in accordance with the method as claimed in claim 9.

21. (Original) A component made from two work-pieces welded together in accordance with the method as claimed in claim 10.